

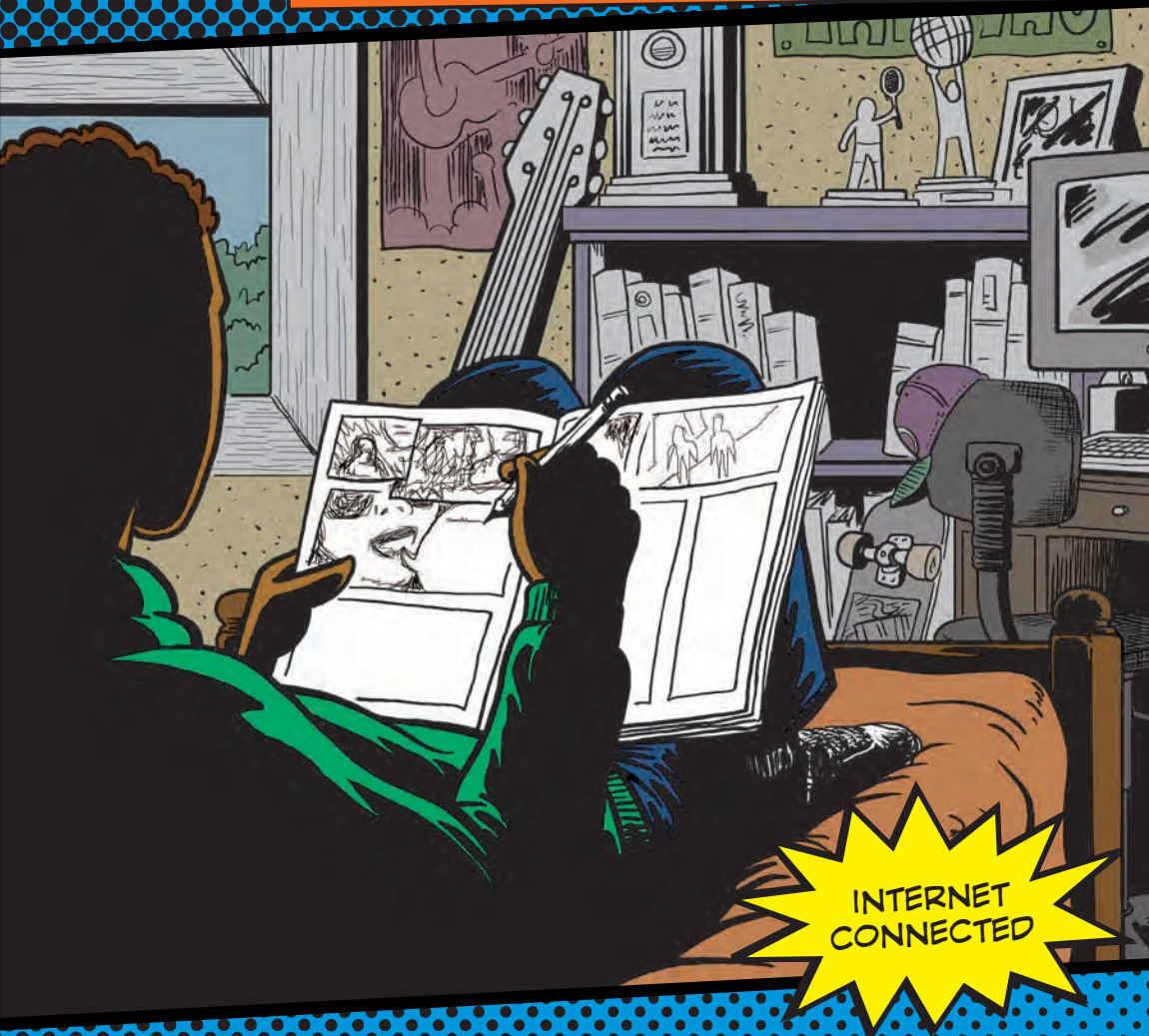
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LANZAROTE
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Your Life in

COMICS

100 Things for Guys to Write and Draw



INTERNET
CONNECTED

Created by Bill Zimmerman, artwork by Tyler Page

free spirit
PUBLISHING®

Your Life in

COMICS

100 Things for Guys to Write and Draw

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free spirit
PUBLISHING®



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DATE BEGUN:

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Dear Reader,

You know how most other books give you all the words and illustrations so you don't have a say about what happens? Well, this book isn't like that. Instead, it's a do-it-yourself comic book where you can tell stories from your life. There are also cartoons where you get to decide what happens to other characters—just follow the prompts and fill in the **talk** and **thought** balloons to determine what the people say and think. Their fate is in your hands! You'll also find pages where you can draw comic strips of your own.

What kind of stuff will you write about and draw in this book? It's up to you. Some of the pages are funny and some are serious. Many are about family, friends, or other people you know. A lot are about things you may have experienced in your life, others probably not. (Unless maybe you *have* met space aliens or done some time traveling). One quality all the pages share is that they are incomplete. They need your imagination to be finished. All you need is something to write with and your good ideas.

Time to enjoy yourself. Have fun!

Sincerely,

Bill Zimmerman

P.S. For more fun, visit my website (www.makebeliefscomix.com).

There you can create comic strips and share cartoon ideas of your own. You can also visit www.freespirit.com/comics for downloadable activities and website extensions from this book.



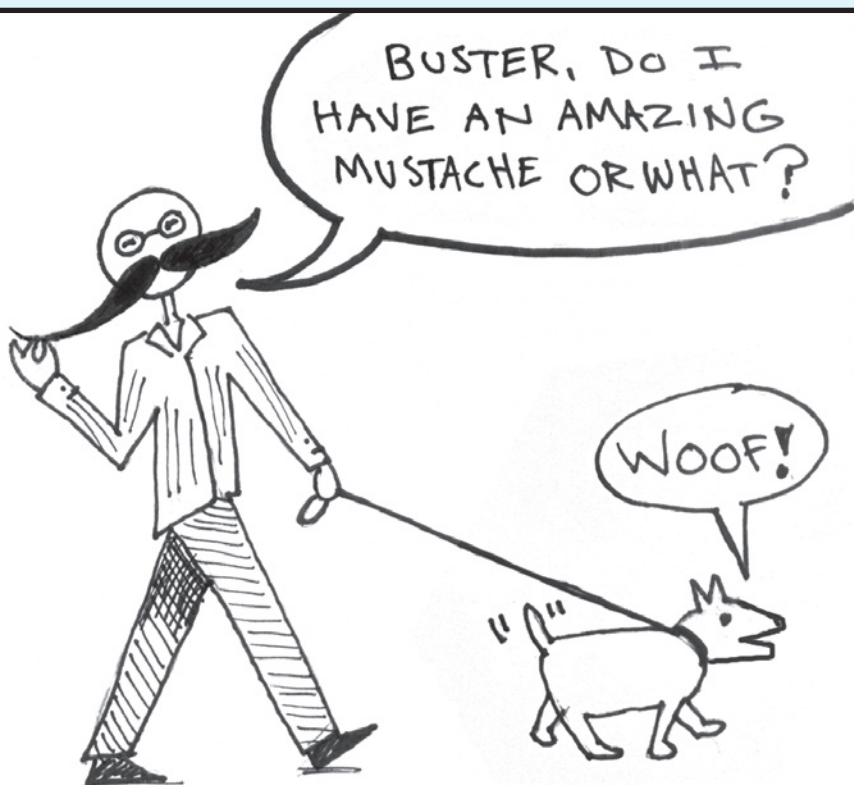
Before You Get Started . . .

Many of the activities in this book let you fill in talk and thought balloons to complete comics. You'll also have the chance to draw comics of your own. Whenever you see this logo  start drawing.

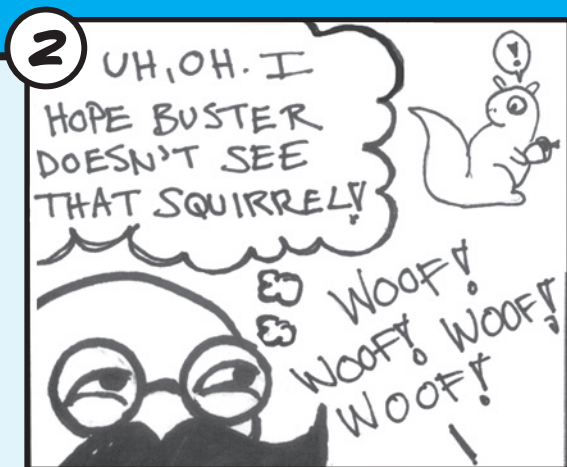
If you don't think you can create the kind of detailed drawings you might see in some comic books, don't worry. Creating comics is all about finding the style that's right for you. You can make really complex drawings to tell your stories if you want, but simple illustrations are okay, too.

Like this guy, who we'll call Mister Mustache, and his dog, Buster:

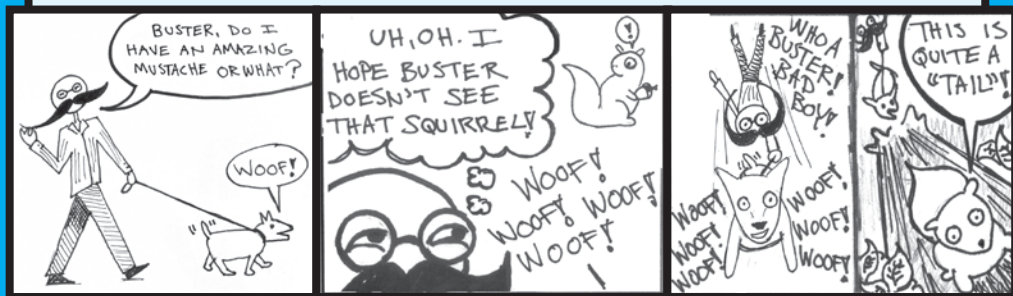
1



Once you have your first scene, the next step is pretty simple . . . just make something happen. It can be anything you want. Like maybe Mister Mustache and Buster walk by a squirrel eating nuts in the park. What do you think will happen next?



That's all it takes. Once you begin a comic strip, you can make it go wherever you like. If you're lucky, your story might even take on a life of its own.



Disclaimer: Your comic strip stories can be a lot less corny than this one! Remember, just use your imagination!

1

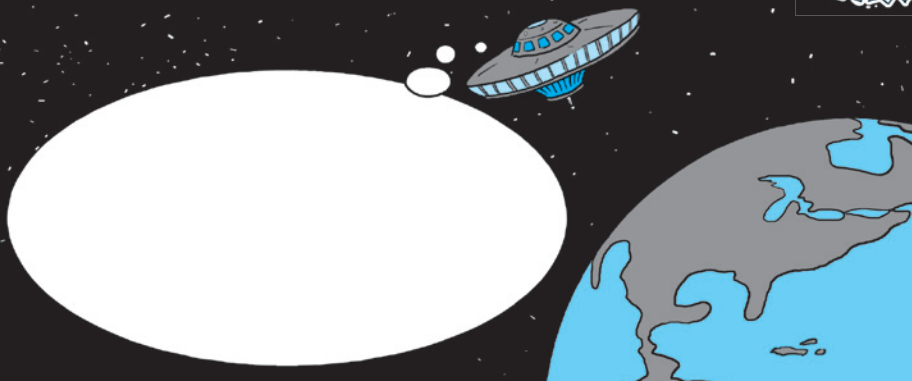
An Interesting Conversation



Put words in their mouths.

2

When Aliens Landed on Earth



THEN . . .

A large empty rectangular box for writing the 'THEN' part of the comic strip.

AFTER THAT . . .

An empty rectangular box for writing the 'AFTER THAT' part of the comic strip.

FINALLY . . .

An empty rectangular box for writing the 'FINALLY' part of the comic strip.

Interested in real efforts to track down life in space? Visit the NASA website (www.nasa.gov) to find updates on the International Space Station, Hubble Space Telescope, Mars orbiter, and other projects helping us learn more about the universe.



3

A family sits down to dinner.



Capture their conversation and thoughts.



MY HAPPIEST MEMORY IS . . .

Hollywood is making a movie about your life.

1) What's it called? _____

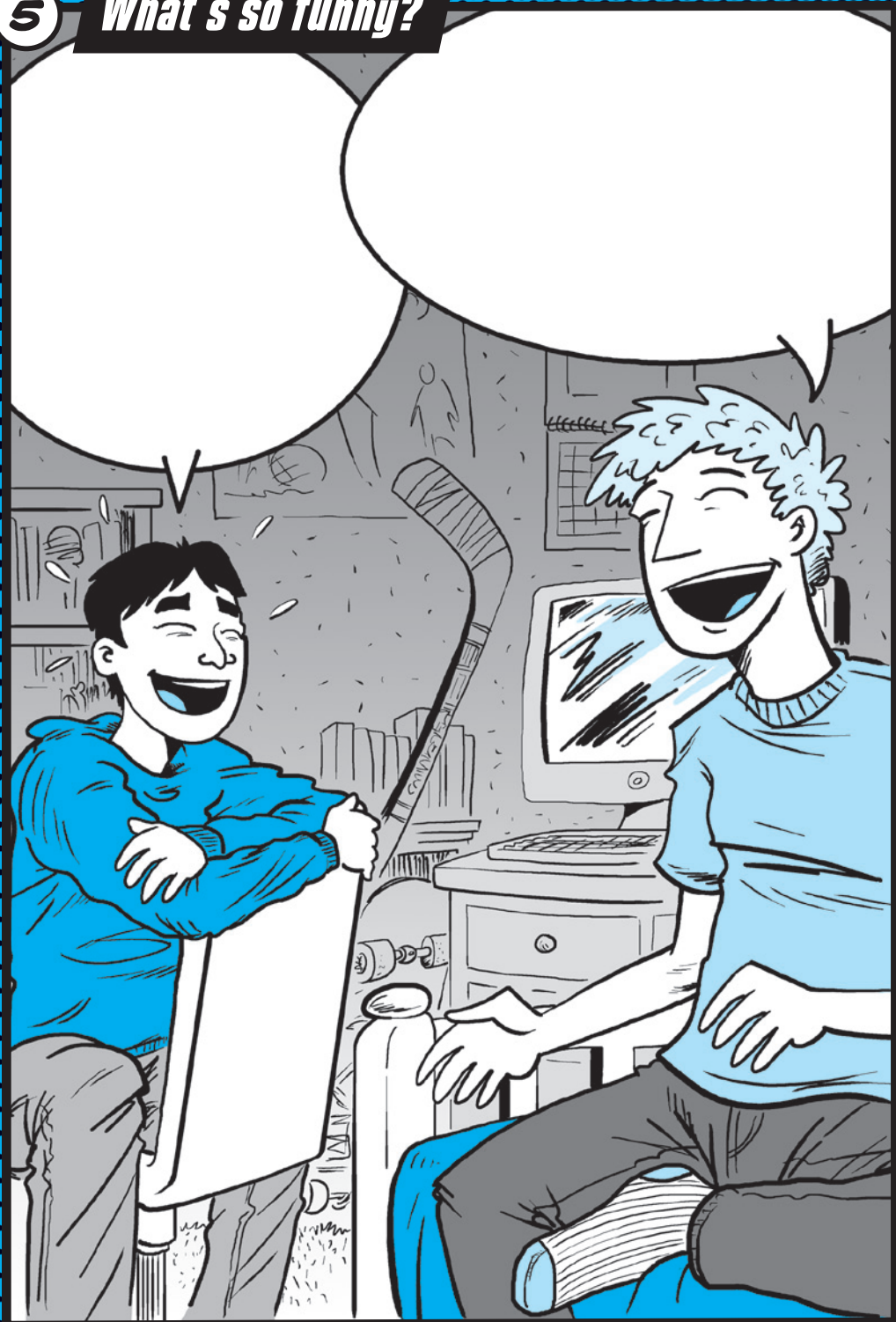
2) Who's playing you? _____

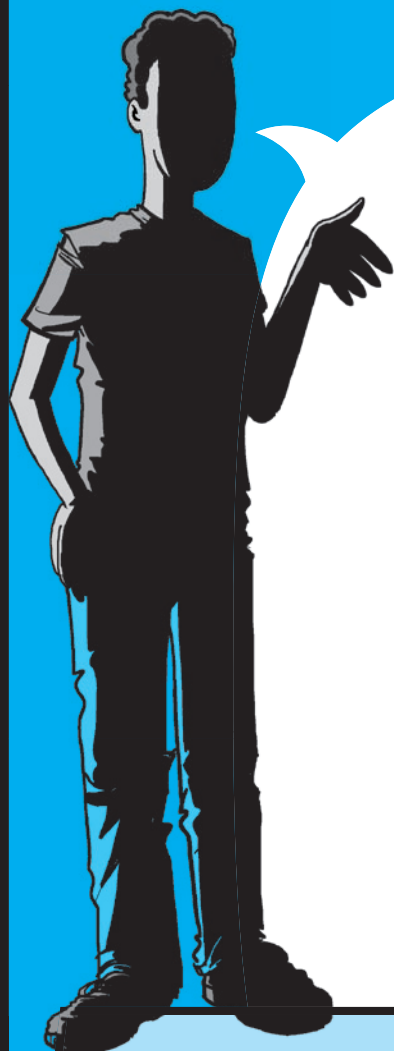
3) Is it a comedy, adventure, drama, or something else? _____

4) What's the storyline? _____

5

What's so funny?





IF I WERE PRESIDENT,
I WOULD . . .

If your plans in life really do include becoming president (hey, you might do an amazing job), you'll need to know a lot about the world. Check out this United Nations website (www.un.org/pubs/cyberschoolbus). It has all kinds of info on each member country and the biggest challenges our planet faces.



7

These guys are competing in a rap showcase.



Give them lyrics.

8

He has so many things on his mind.



9

She has good news!





I LOVE TO . . .

Top 3 Most Important Things in My Life

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

IF SOMEONE GAVE
YOU A MILLION
BUCKS, WHAT
WOULD YOU DO?





Like what you see? Make a website of your own at a blog hosting site. A few popular (and free) sites are WordPress (www.wordpress.org), Blogger (www.blogger.com), and Blogsome (www.blogsome.com). These sites take you through step-by-step directions for creating fun websites. You can also create your own profile page at an online community (see #75 for some options).





YOU LOOK LIKE
YOU HAD A
BAD DAY. WHAT
HAPPENED?

***Write a text message
to a friend.***



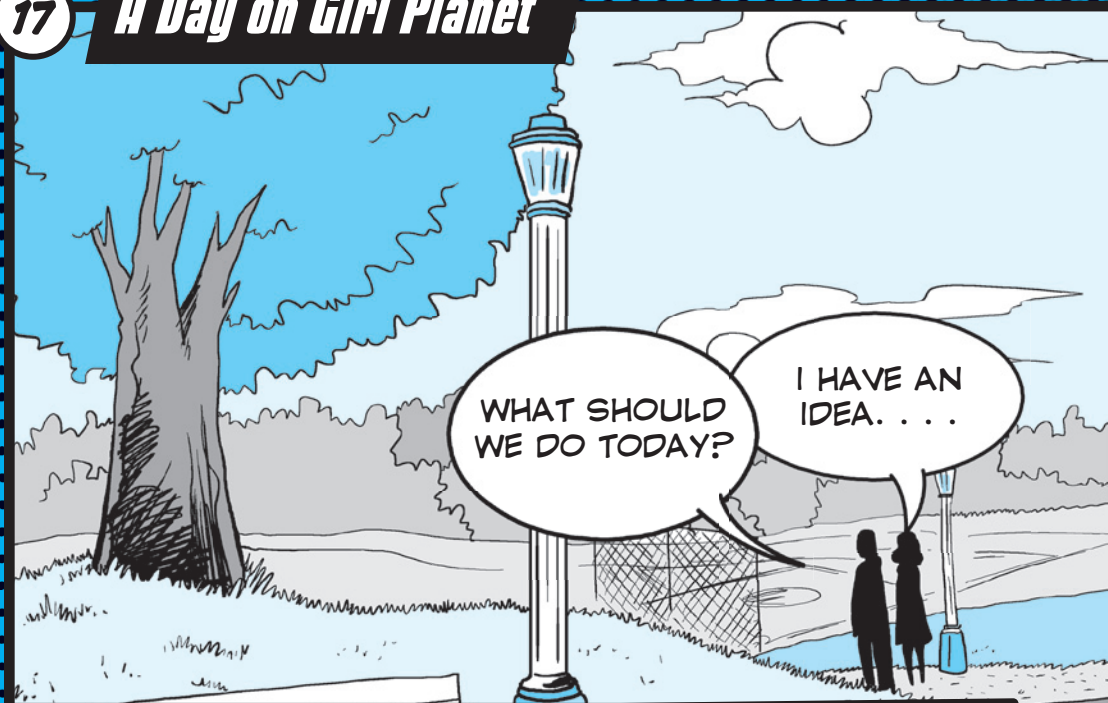
Draw a CD cover for an album you and your band have recorded.



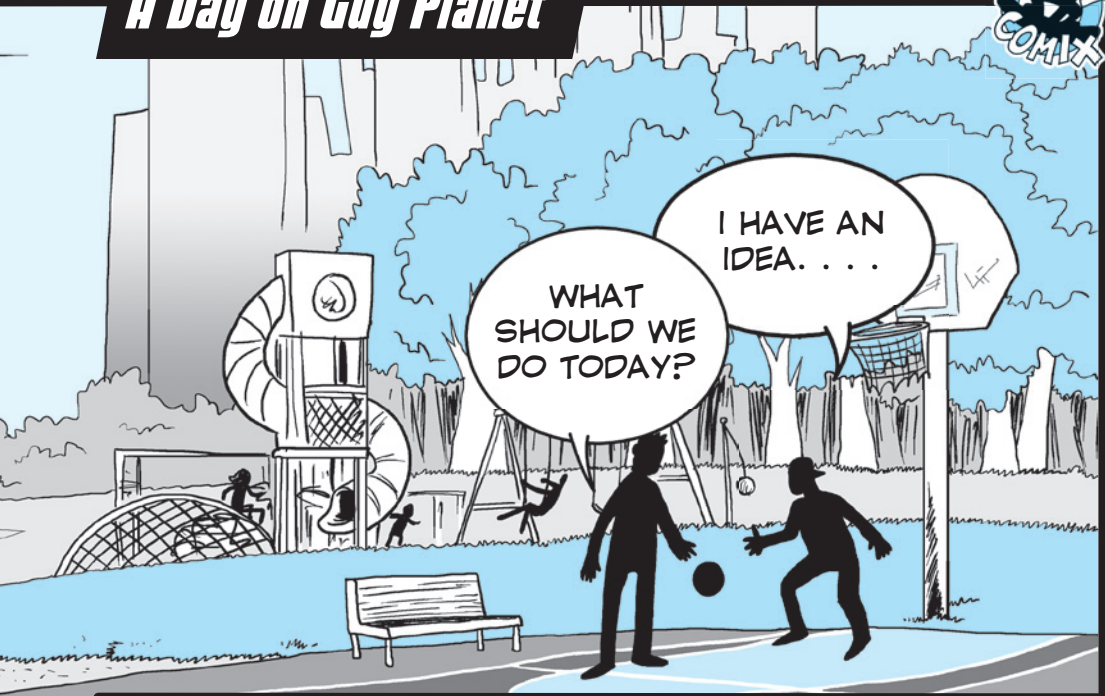


THAT GUY'S
PICKING ON ME
AGAIN. WHAT
SHOULD I DO?



***LATER . . .******STILL LATER . . .******AT MIDNIGHT . . .***

A Day on Guy Planet



LATER . . .

STILL LATER . . .

AT MIDNIGHT . . .



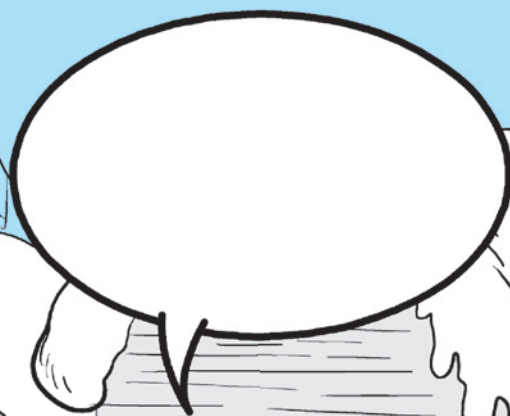
Put words in their mouths.

You're working on a scientific discovery that will change the world. Draw and explain your idea.

Did you know that when a dolphin or whale sleeps, half of its brain shuts down while the other half is active? Because these water mammals must rise to the surface of the ocean to breathe, they cannot completely go unconscious or would risk dying. Visit Science News for Kids (www.sciencenewsforkids.org) for all kinds of interesting facts about our planet.



WHAT'S YOUR
GREATEST DREAM?



21

Ghost Story



THE NEXT MORNING . . .







THE CRAZIEST THING I
EVER DID WAS . . .

You can be any person from history . . .

1) Who would you be? _____

2) Why? _____

3) How would you change history? _____

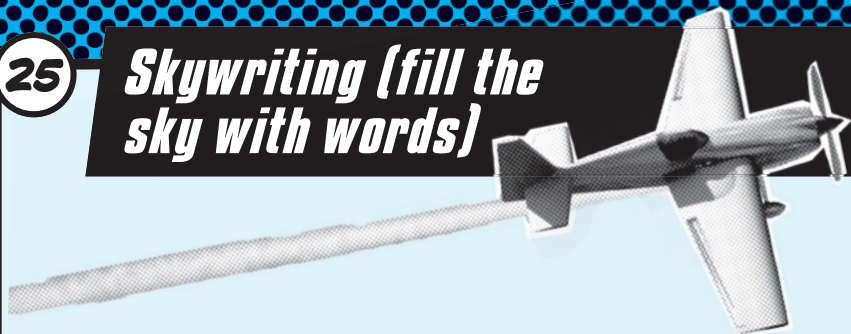
*Want to brush up on your knowledge of famous figures from history?
Learn about heroes and tyrants from the near and distant past at
Kidipede (www.historyforkids.org).*





25

Skywriting (fill the sky with words)



Top 3 Superpowers You Want

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Take your superpowers and create your superhero physique. It's no sweat at the website of Marvel Comics (www.marvel.com/create_your_own_superhero), where you can morph yourself into a lean, mean, evil-fighting machine.



26

Draw yourself playing with your favorite sports or music star. (Or add your photos together in a collage.)

You have an idea for a new reality TV show.

1) What's it called? _____

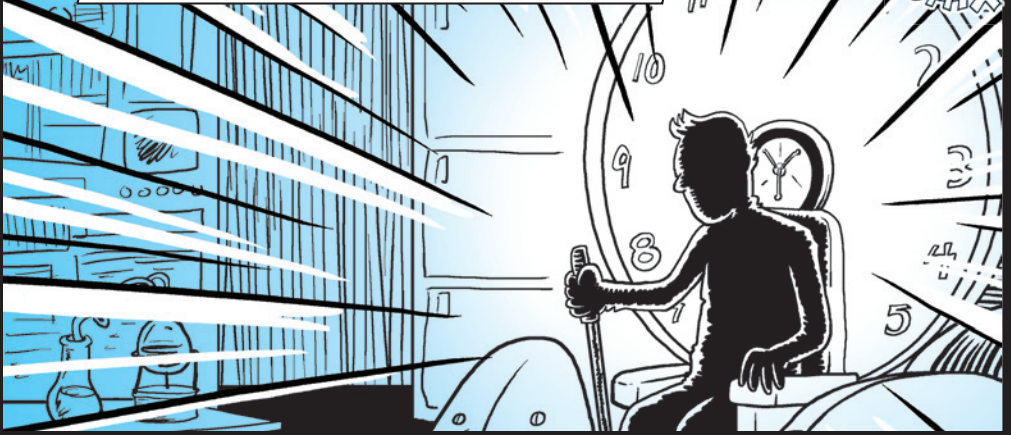
2) What happens? _____

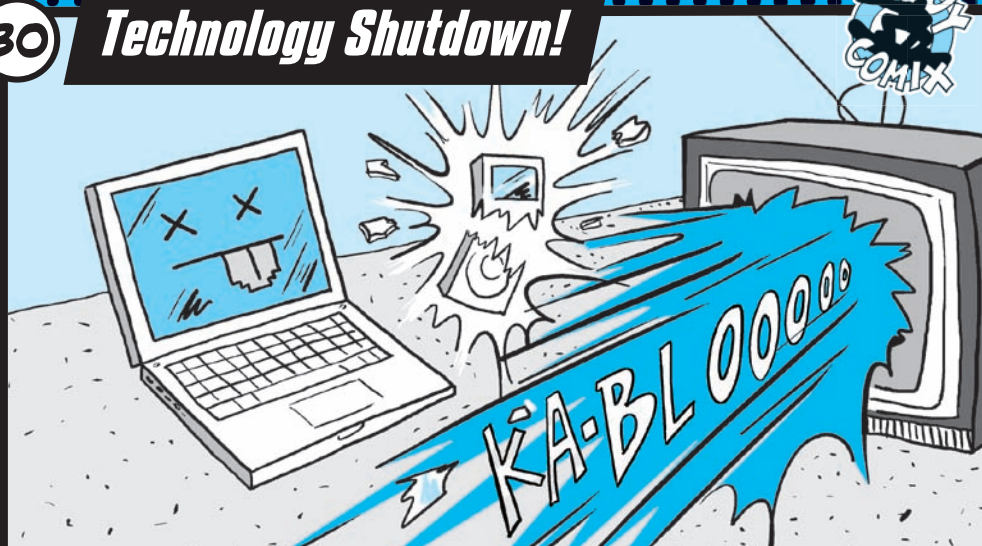


Who is your best friend and why?



Imagine you're an adult and have a son. What advice or helpful words do you offer him?

***HIS ARRIVAL******HE MEETS SOMEONE
OR SOMETHING******TO STAY OR
RETURN HOME?***



How will you survive three days without your electronic gadgets?

FIRST DAY

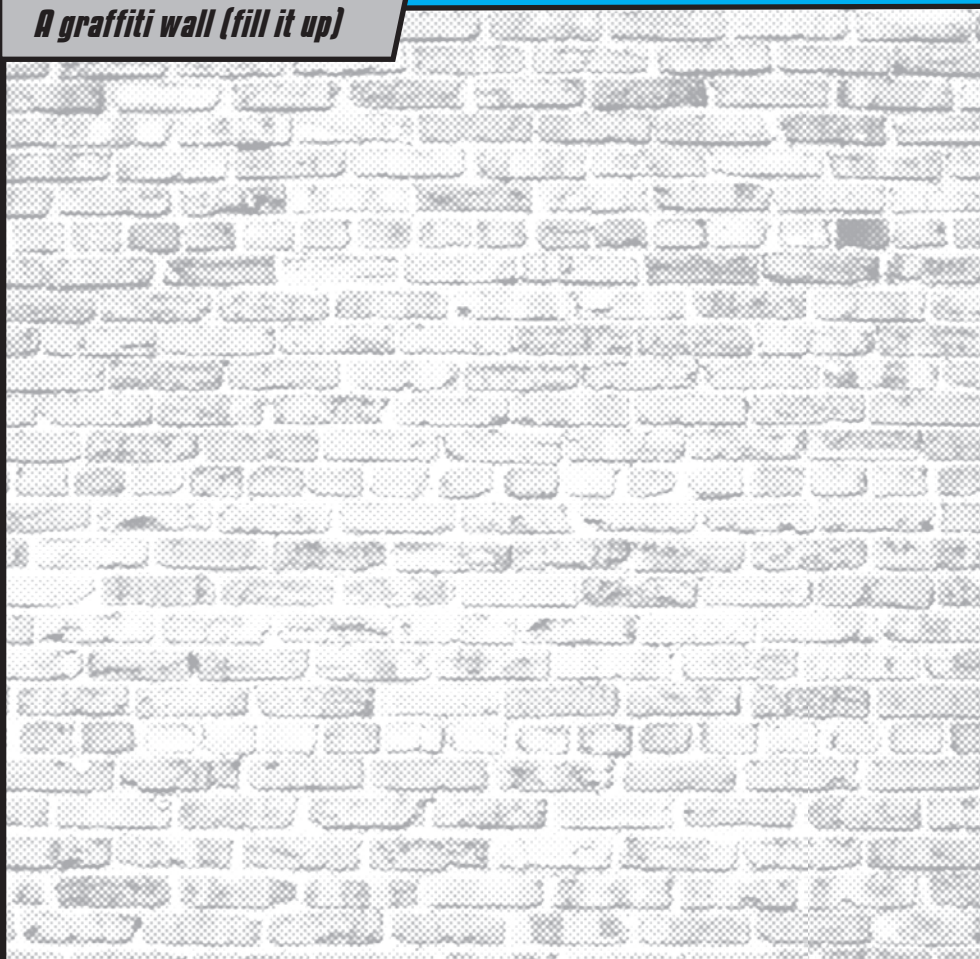
SECOND DAY

THIRD DAY



THE HOLIDAY I LIKE
MOST IS . . .

A graffiti wall (fill it up)







AT SCHOOL . . .

AT HOME . . .

WITH FRIENDS . . .



WHAT'S THE FUNNIEST
THING ANYONE HAS
EVER SAID TO YOU?





37

Draw an Embarrassing Moment

Top 5 Fun Things to Do

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____





MY BIGGEST
ACHIEVEMENT SO FAR
HAS BEEN . . .

*Accomplishing your goals
can take a lot of hard work.*



*Sometimes it's nice to have a little
help along the way. The Boys and Girls
Clubs of America (www.bgca.org) and
Big Brothers Big Sisters of America
(www.bbbs.org) connect teens with
adult mentors.*



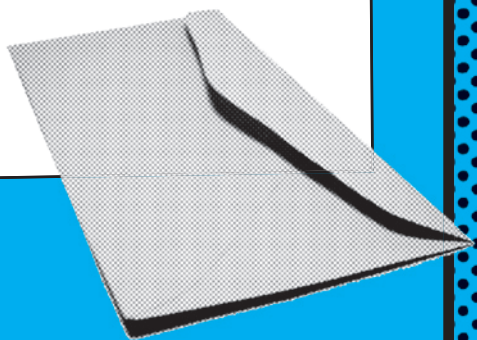


AT SCHOOL . . .

AT HOME . . .

WITH FRIENDS . . .

INVISIBLE GUY REVEALED





I HATE . . .

Cave Drawings

Visit National Geographic Kids (www.kids.nationalgeographic.com) for lots of cool facts about our planet and past civilizations. With information on science, history, space, animals, and other topics, the site is sure to take you to new worlds.





Write something in a secret language that no one but you can figure out.

Write the translation upside down just in case you forget the secret code. Or write everything backward so the only way to read your writing is by holding it up to the mirror.

Are you really into codes? Go online and check out the Cryptoclub (www.cryptoclub.math.uic.edu) to create all different kinds of codes. Programs can help you break down codes containing any letters and numbers. There are also jokes and games that let you put your code-cracking skills into action.



WHAT'S HE
GOT OVER
US?



Words for a new song you are writing.



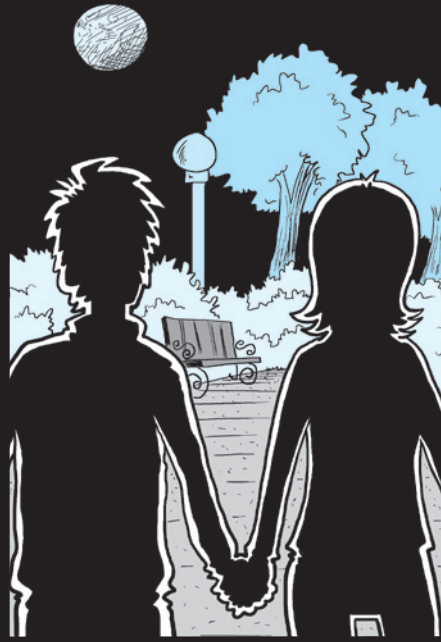
Title: _____

Lyrics:

48

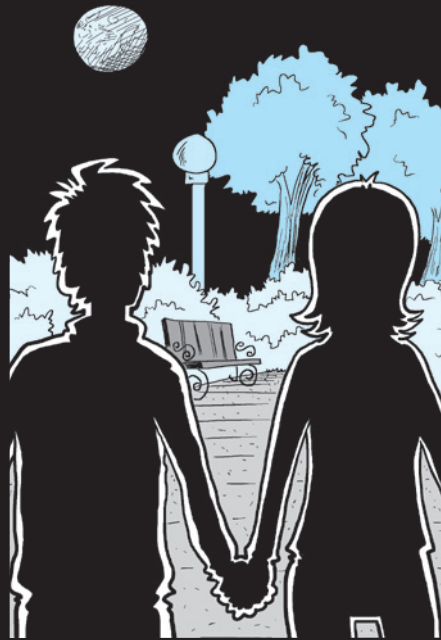
A First Date Where Everything Went Wrong

AT THE COFFEE SHOP . . .



A First Date Where Everything Went Right

AT THE COFFEE SHOP . . .





AT THE MOVIES . . .

SAYING GOOD-BYE . . .

AT THE MOVIES . . .

SAYING GOOD-BYE . . .

No one knows this about me:

You can write this in your secret code or language (see #45).

Who's your hero and why?

(Add a photo or draw the person if you like.)

Heroes are everywhere. The My Hero Project (www.myhero.com) has stories about people from all over the world who have accomplished extraordinary things. Visit the site to learn more about famous and everyday heroes who are changing the world one person at a time.



On the billboard, write a message to the world.

50



My Invention (what it does and what it looks like)

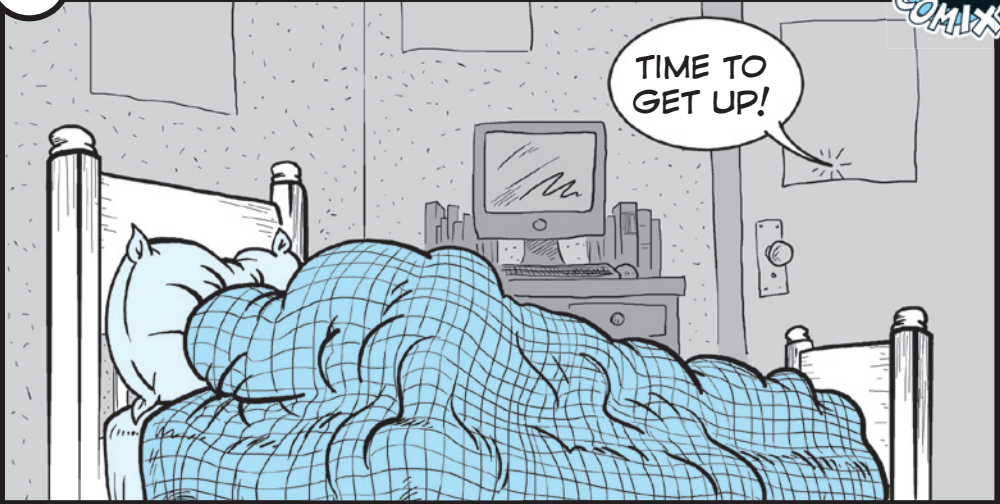
A large, empty white rectangular area for writing the description of the invention.

Do you have a lot of interest in gadgets? Visit How Stuff Works (www.howstuffworks.com) for the secrets behind how computers, machines, and all kinds of other things function.





Deep down, what does this boy want to ask or say to his dad?



BREAKFAST

GOING OUT TOGETHER

HANGING OUT AT HOME

Design a new kind of school locker and decorate it.

Write the story of your life in no more than 140 characters.



Mastered telling your life story in 140 characters or less? Think you could do it in six words? Log on to www.smithteens.com to learn more about six-word memoirs, a national project in which teens sum up their lives in half a dozen words.





THE MOST IMPORTANT
THING I KNOW IS . . .

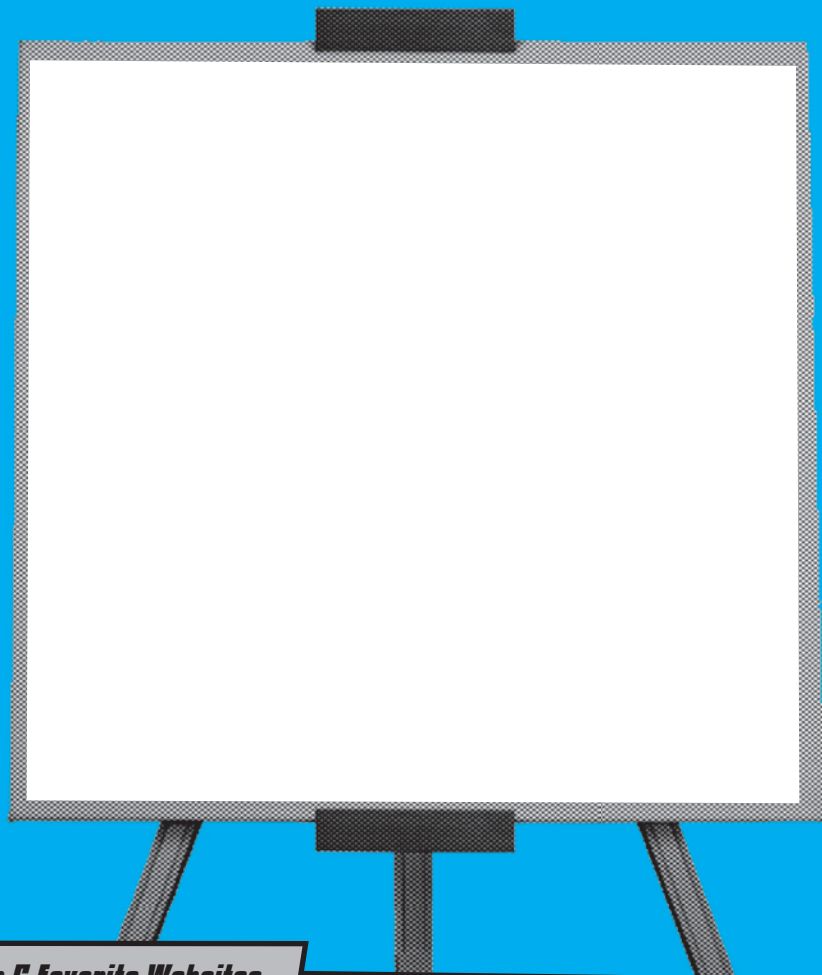
What place would you like to visit? Why?

Where?

Why?



WHAT'S THE HARDEST
THING YOU'VE EVER
HAD TO HANDLE?

***Top 5 Favorite Websites***

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

SOMETIMES I FEEL
TOTALLY ALONE.
I JUST DON'T FIT IN.
WHAT SHOULD
I DO?





THE ONE THING THAT
DRIVES ME CRAZY IS . . .

It's your high school reunion 25 years from now, and you are a big success. What have you achieved?

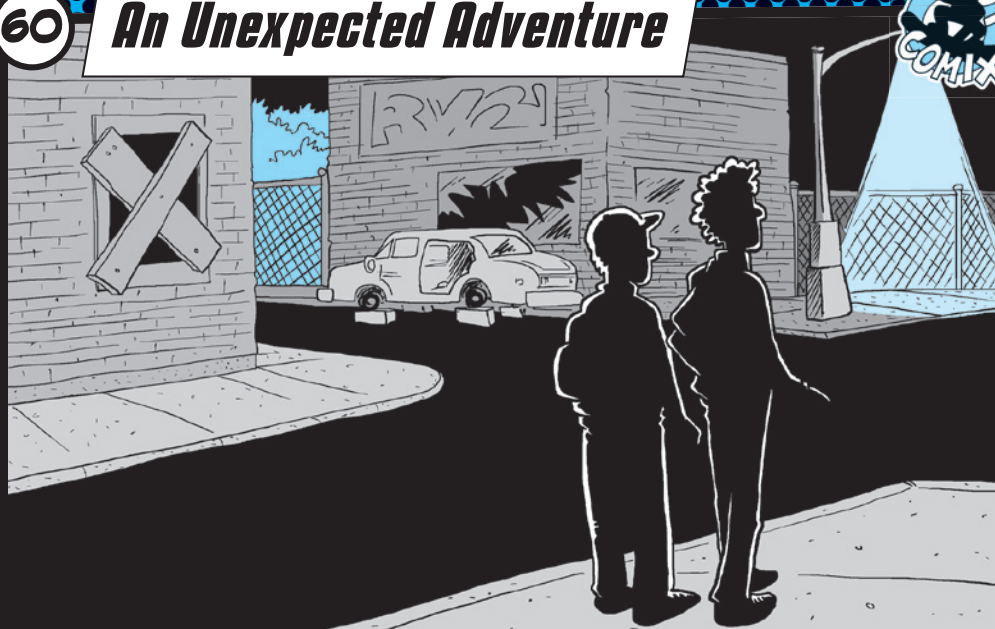
Have a goal you'd like to reach? Sometimes another person helping can make all the difference in the world. Mentor (www.mentor.org) is an organization that connects teens with adults who can share knowledge about different careers or interest areas.



Play the gossip game.



*Start a rumor in the first balloon and keep it moving.
How does it change? What's the final message?*



S
U
D
D
E
N
L
Y
.
.
.

.....

THEN . . .

FINALLY . . .





C'MON—
JUST TRY IT.



***You have discovered a new star in the universe.
Name and draw it.***

64



Top 3 Things You Want to Do in Your Life

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

1) What book did you choose? _____

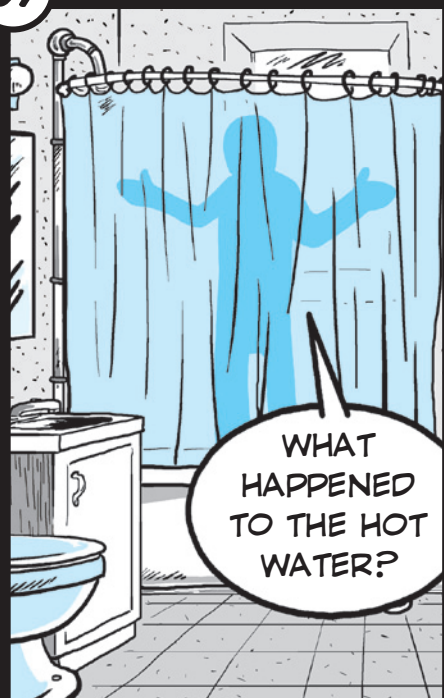
2) Which character are you? _____

3) How does the story change now that you're in it? _____

Do you have a hard time finding books that are right for you? A lot of guys have this problem. That's why one famous author, Jon Scieszka, created a website called GuysRead (www.guysread.com). You can log on for some great reading recommendations and links to the websites of your favorite authors.







AT SCHOOL . . .

The Day Everything Went Right

AT SCHOOL . . .

AT HOME ...

WITH YOUR FRIENDS ...

AT HOME ...

WITH YOUR FRIENDS ...







A TIME WHEN SOMEONE
HELPED ME WAS . . .

Create a Mission Impossible for your best friend.

[illegible]

Three Wishes



WISH 1:

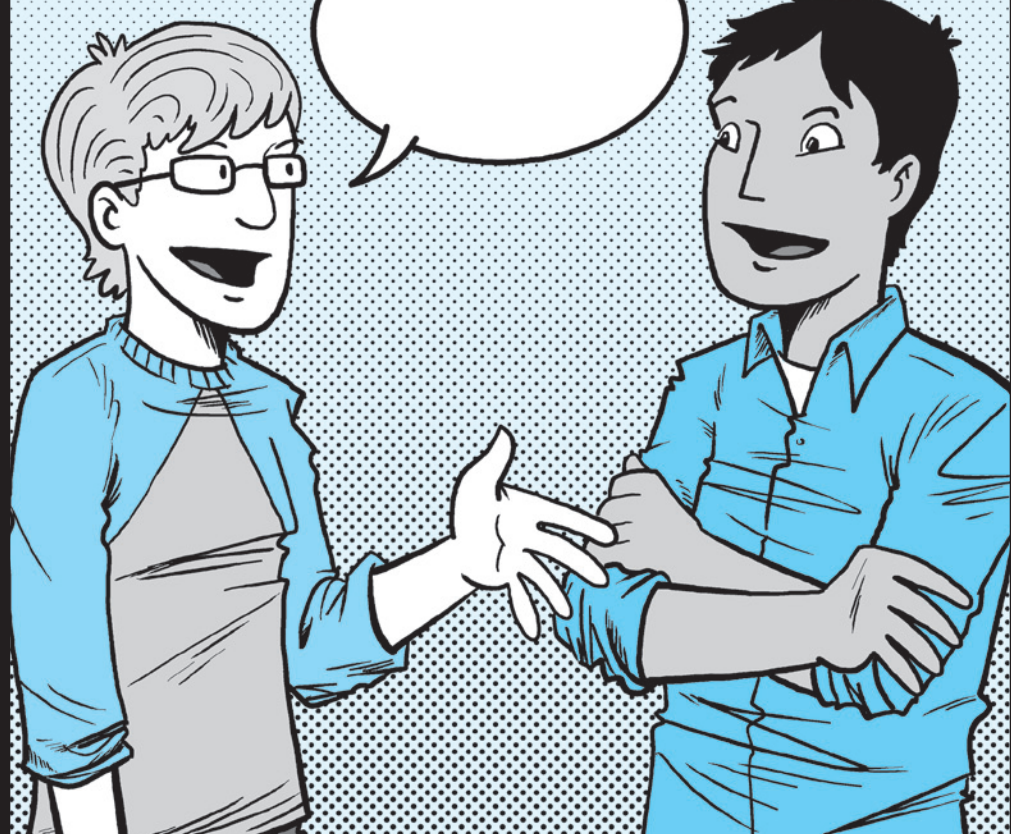
WISH 2:

WISH 3:



KNOCK-KNOCK!

WHO'S THERE?





- 1) _____

- 2) _____

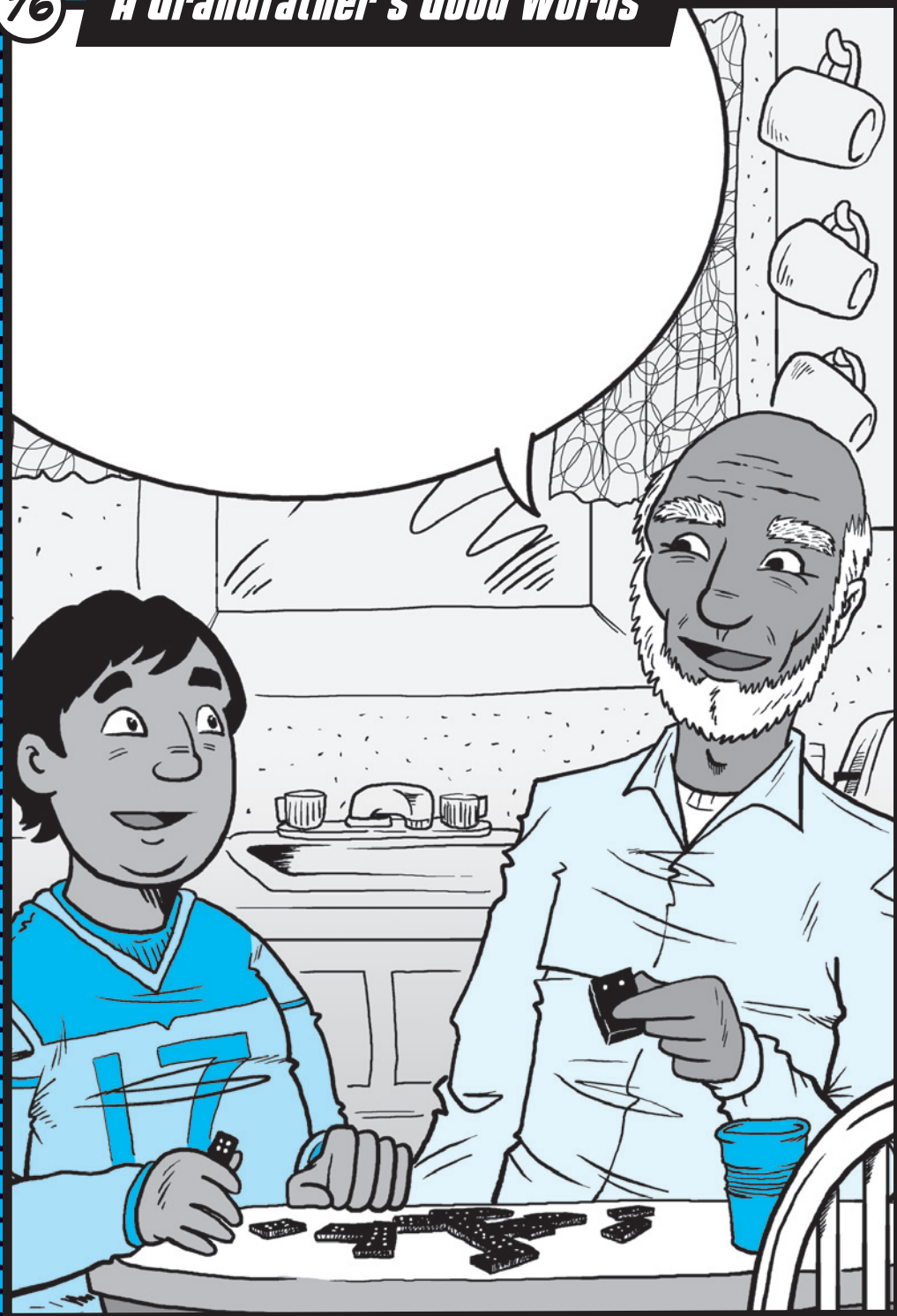
- 3) _____

Create an avatar to represent you on the Web.



If it's okay with adults at home, join one of the online communities at Club Penguin (www.clubpenguin.com), Whyville (whyville.net), or Nicktropolis (nicktropolis.com). These virtual worlds allow you to create your own character and environments not to mention hang out with your friends.











79

Your Life in Comics

***YOUR EARLIEST
MEMORY***

***MEETING YOUR
BEST FRIEND***

A HUGE ACCOMPLISHMENT

ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT

1) What's it called? _____

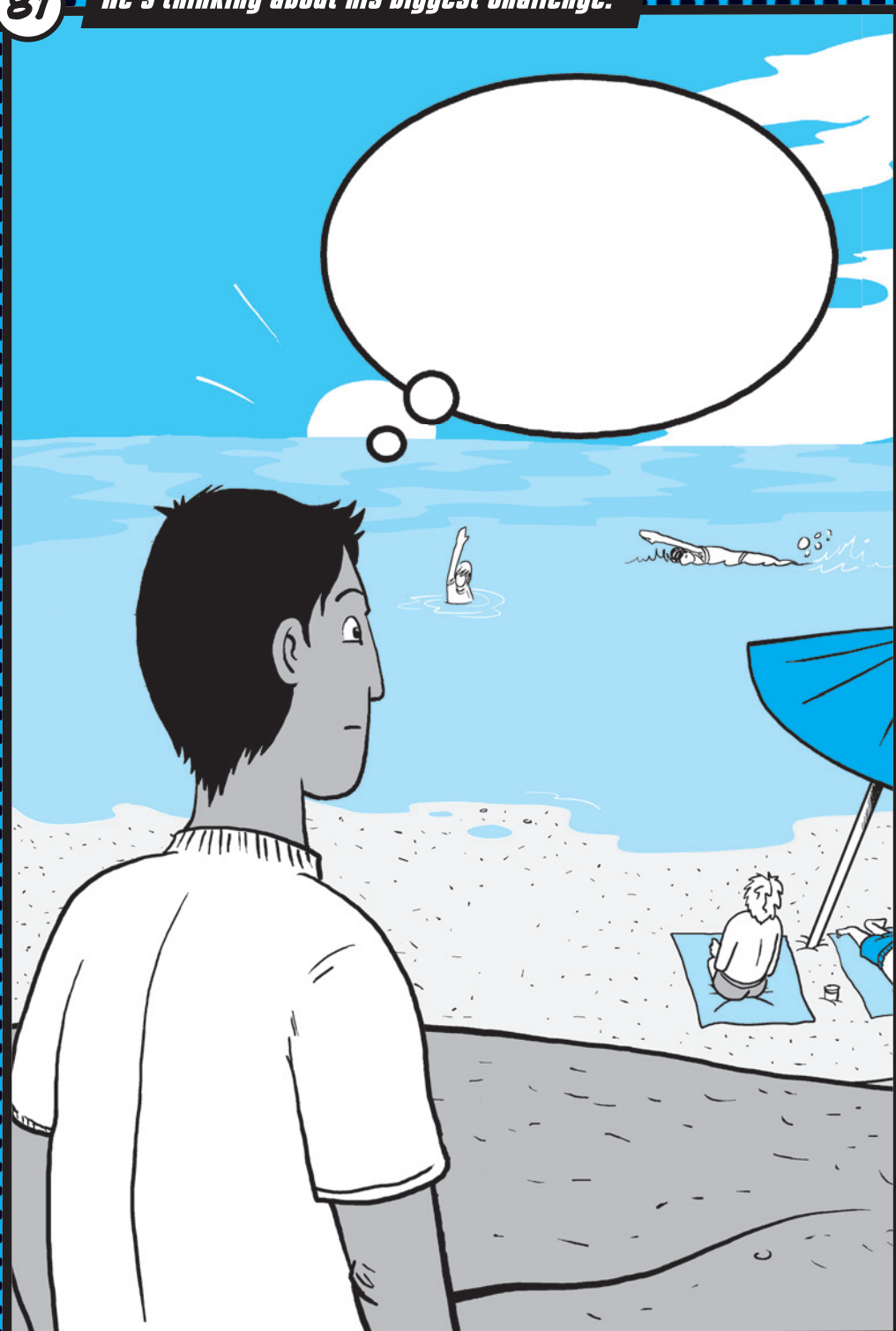
2) How do you do it? _____

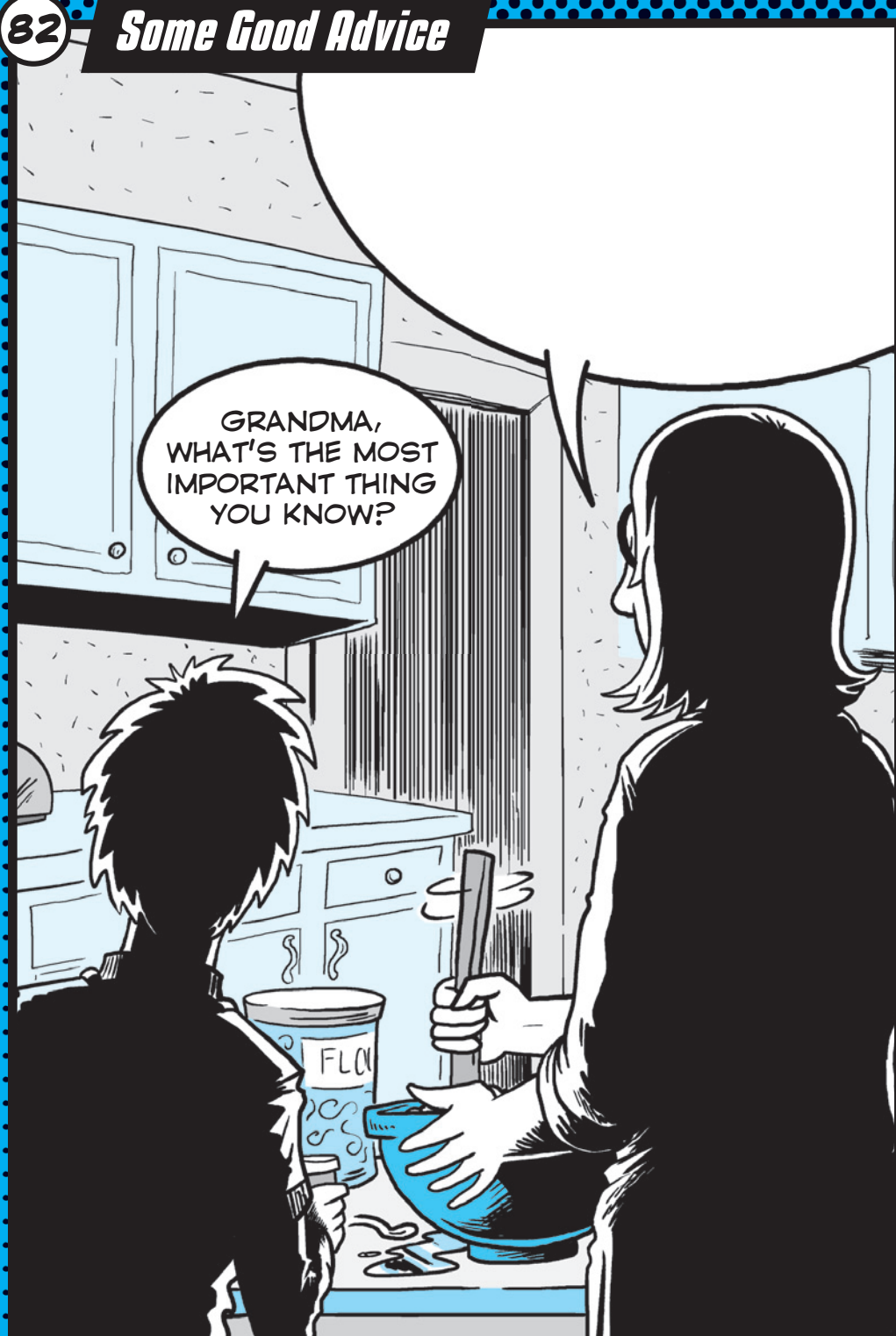
3) How do you win? _____

Design a robot to make your life easier.

Okay, say you wanted to build this robot or another cool invention that will change the world. What could you do? One option: Visit the BKfK website (www.bkfk.com), a place where you can find inventing tips and enter inventions in contests. (Winners' ideas are made into products!) There are also profiles of other young people and their innovations to get you inspired.





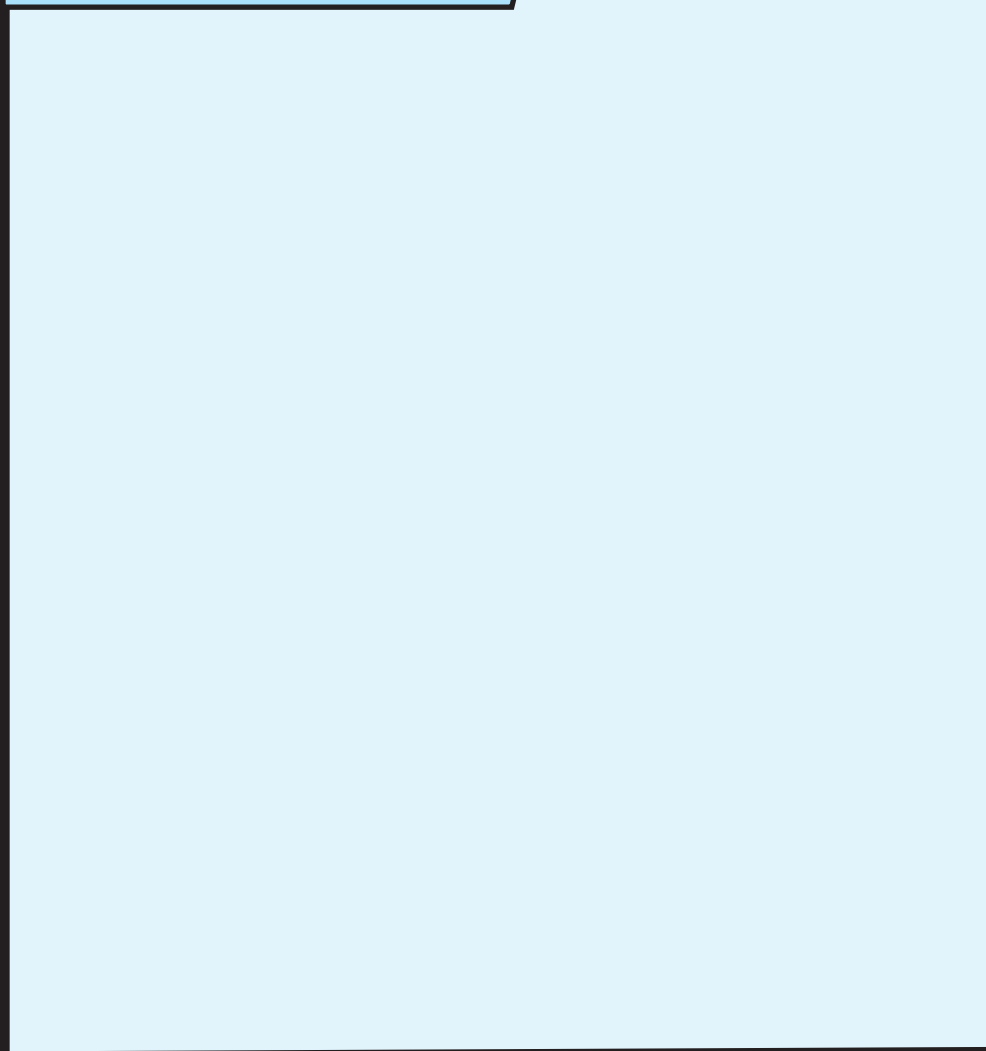


GRANDMA,
WHAT'S THE MOST
IMPORTANT THING
YOU KNOW?

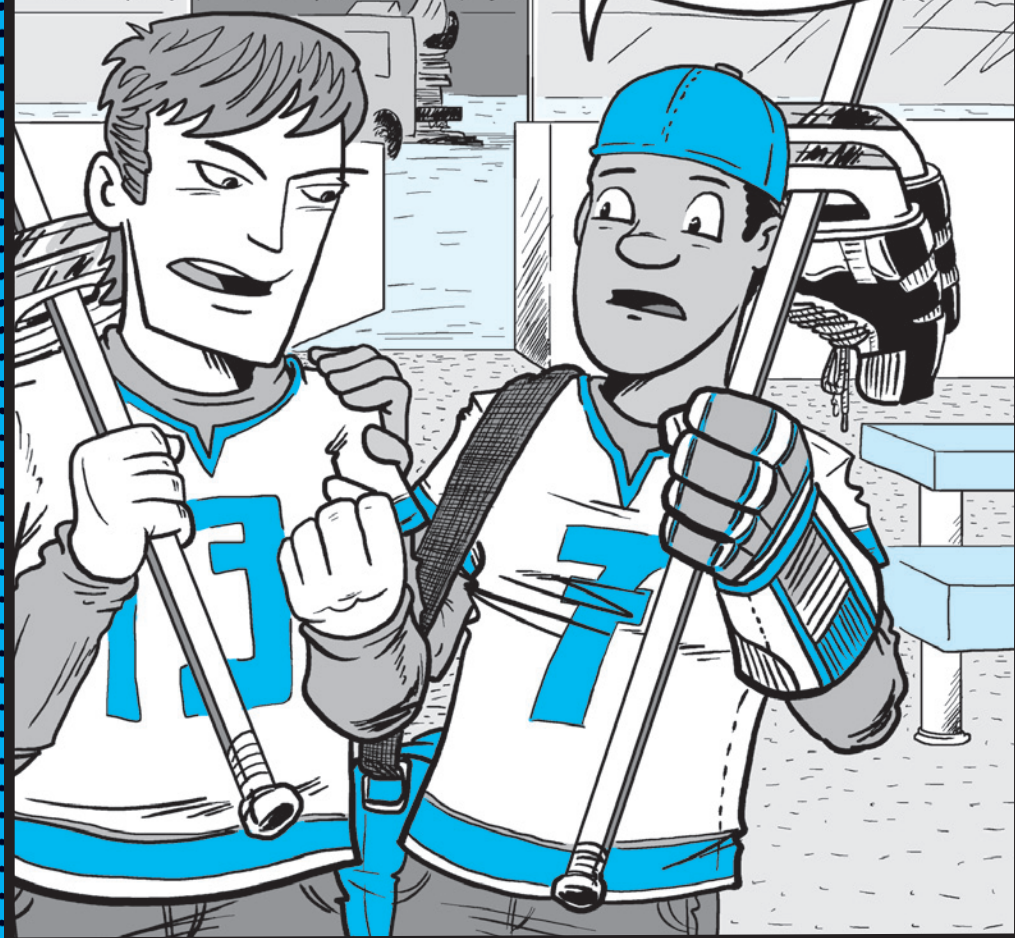
83

A Promise You Have Made to Yourself

Draw the best bedroom of all time.



I'M SO MAD I FEEL
LIKE I'M GONNA
EXPLODE!



The Ultimate Menu***Breakfast******Dinner******Lunch******Drinks***

Have questions about food, fitness, friendship, life? Visit the BAM! site (www.bam.gov) for fun games and interesting information about all kinds of stuff that matters. There's also expert advice on topics like puberty and getting along with others.



WHAT'S THE
COOLEST THING
YOU'VE EVER DONE?



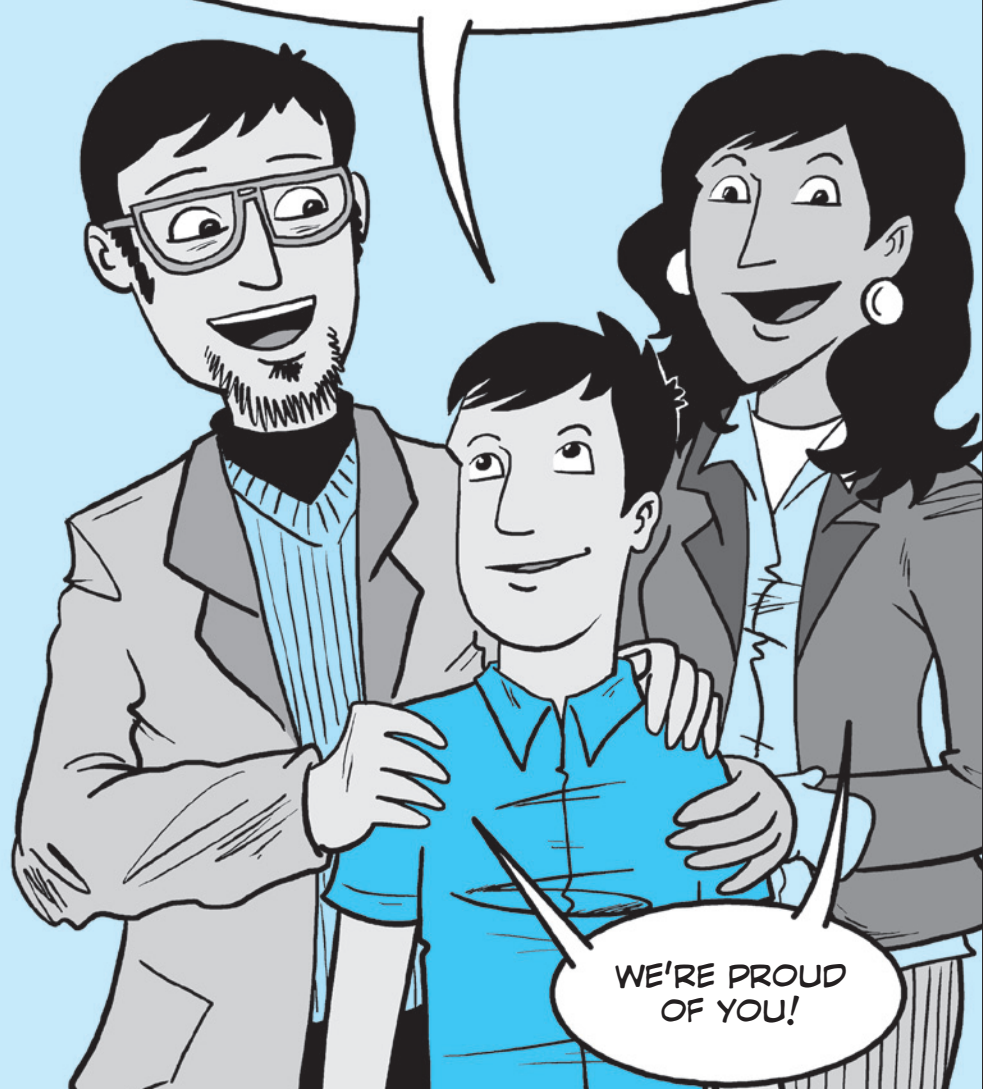


*Want to learn some wild moves of your own? Get a deck up by visiting **Skateboard Science at Exploratorium** (www.exploratorium.edu/skateboarding). Here you'll find the science behind skateboarding tricks and how you can perform them.*











91

Predictions for the future

*TRANSPORTATION
IN THE YEAR 2040*

*NEW SUPERHERO
IN THE YEAR 2050*

NEW INVENTION IN THE YEAR 2075

ANOTHER PREDICTION







THEY SAY YOU ARE
WHAT YOU EAT. SO
WHAT DID YOU EAT
TODAY?

Does learning about nutrition have to be boring? Not a chance. Nutrition Explorations (www.nutritionexplorations.org/kids) has games and activities about eating well and feeling good. There are also contests and links to more fun.





Your luckiest day (what happened?)

WHAT IS ONE
THING YOU'D
CHANGE ABOUT
YOURSELF IF
YOU COULD?









100

You in the Future

IN HIGH SCHOOL

HANGING WITH FRIENDS

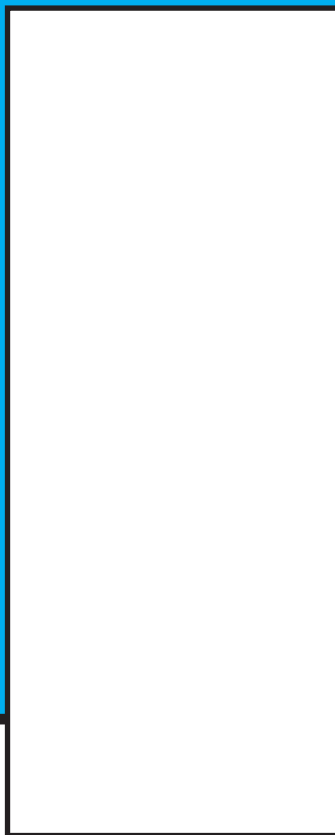
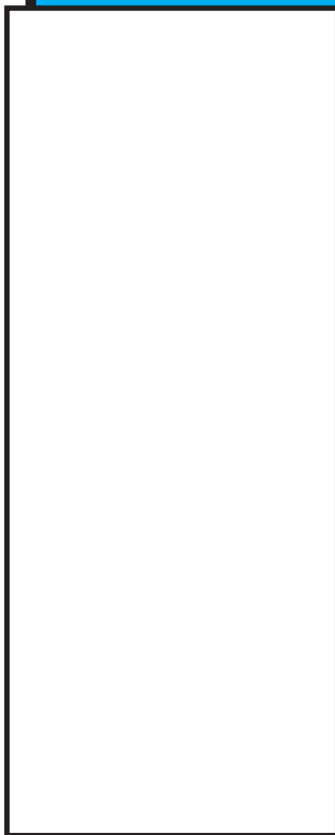
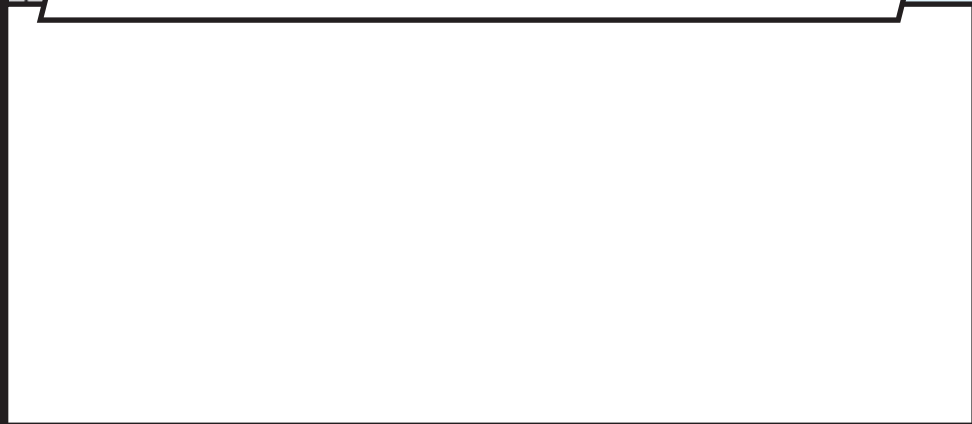


AT YOUR JOB

WITH YOUR FAMILY



USE THESE PAGES
TO DRAW MORE
STORIES FROM
YOUR LIFE!





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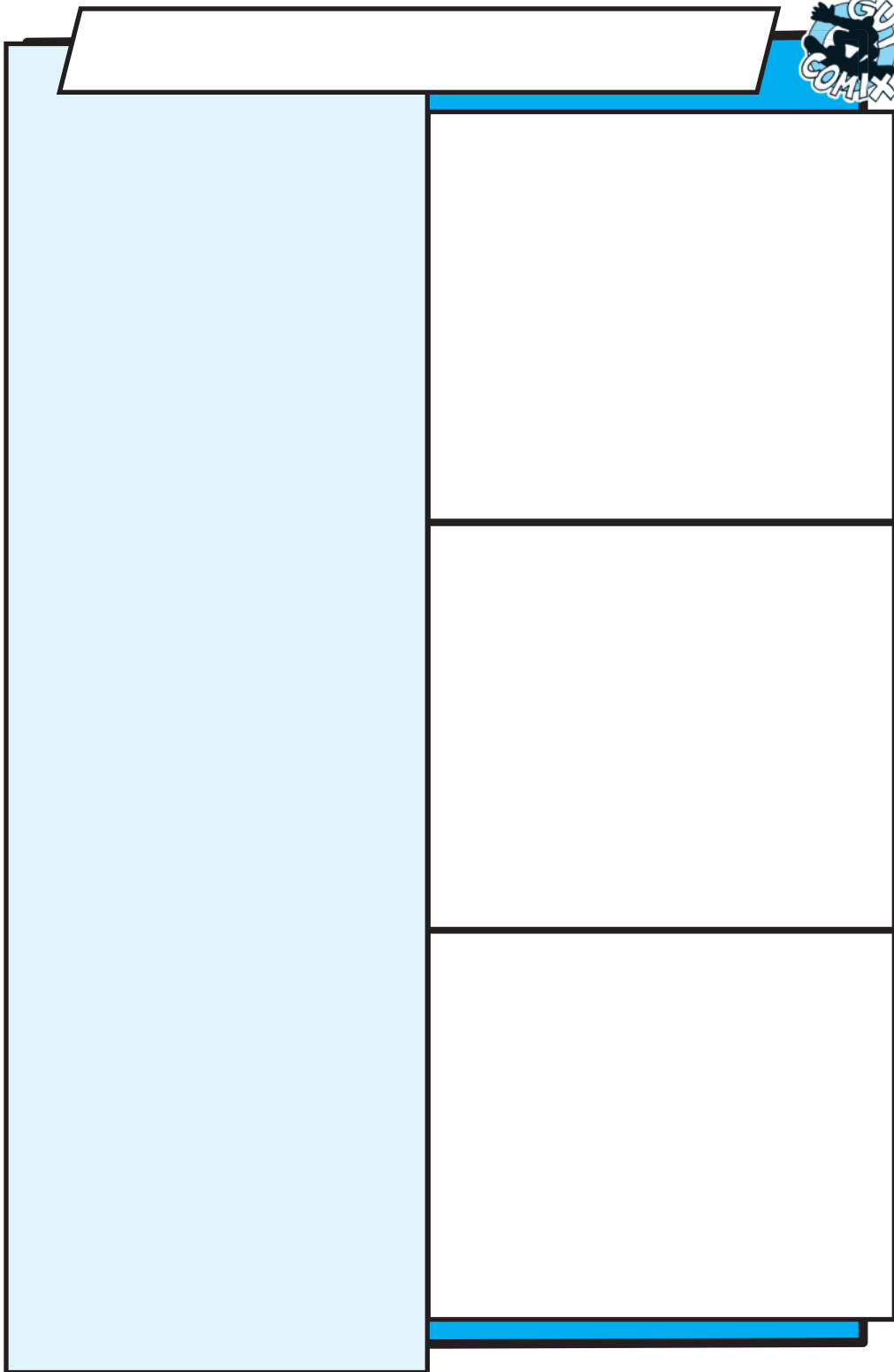
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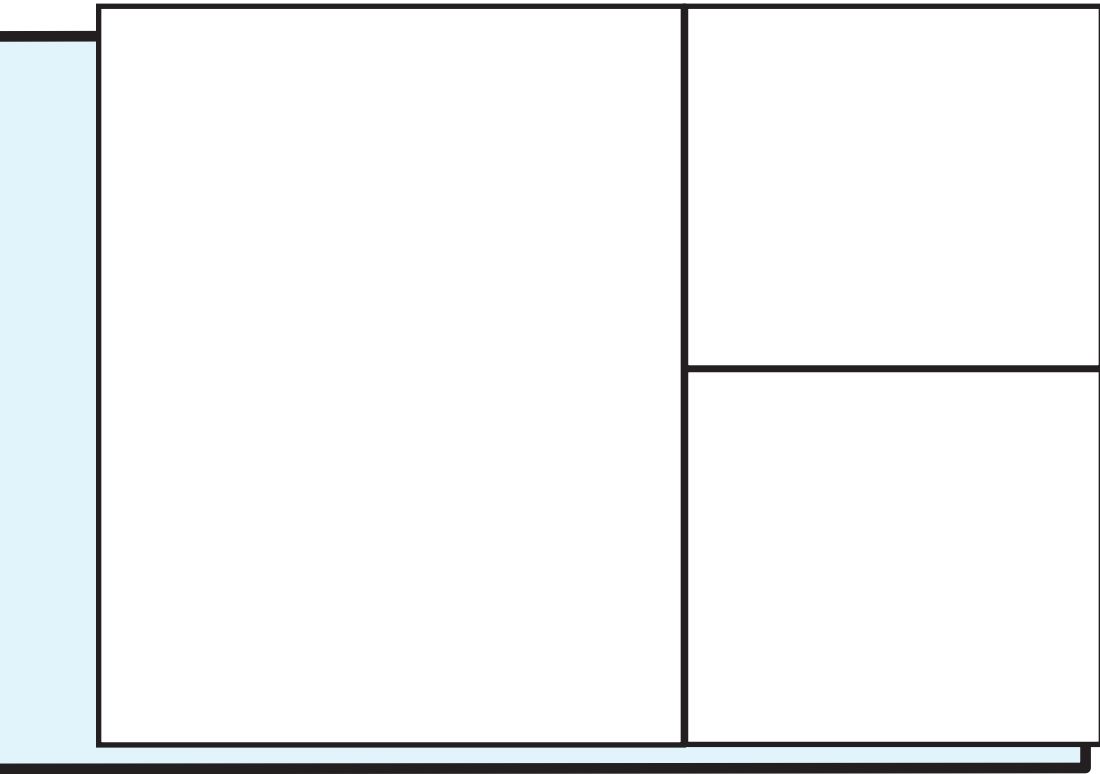


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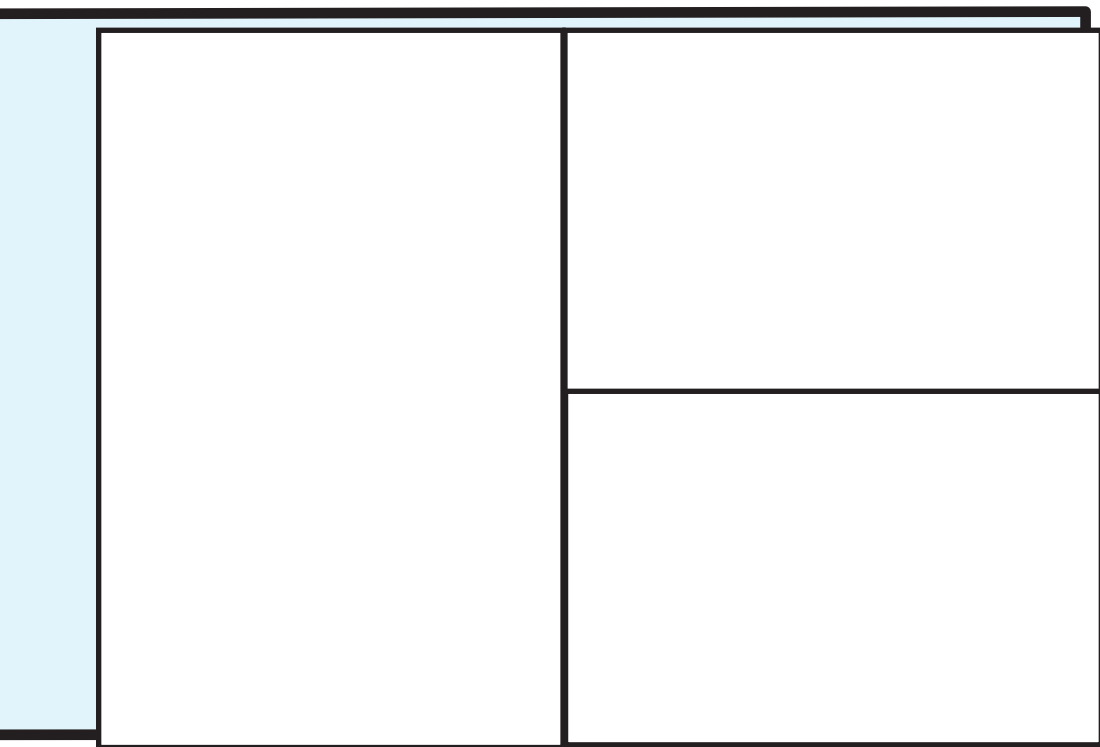
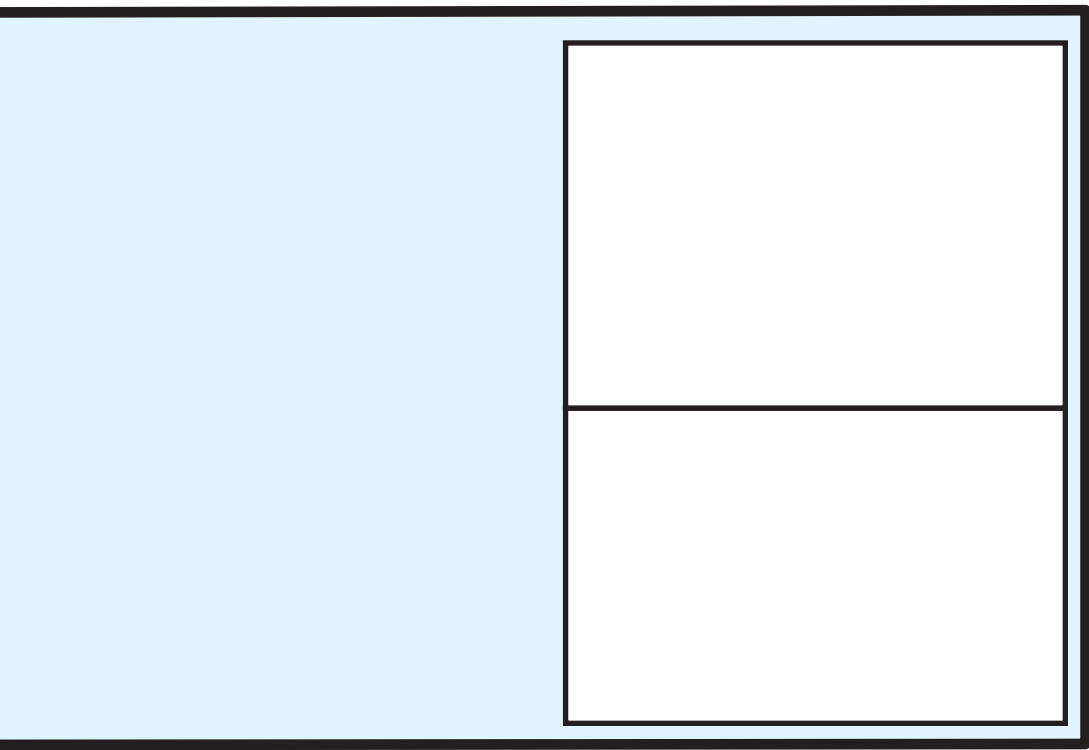
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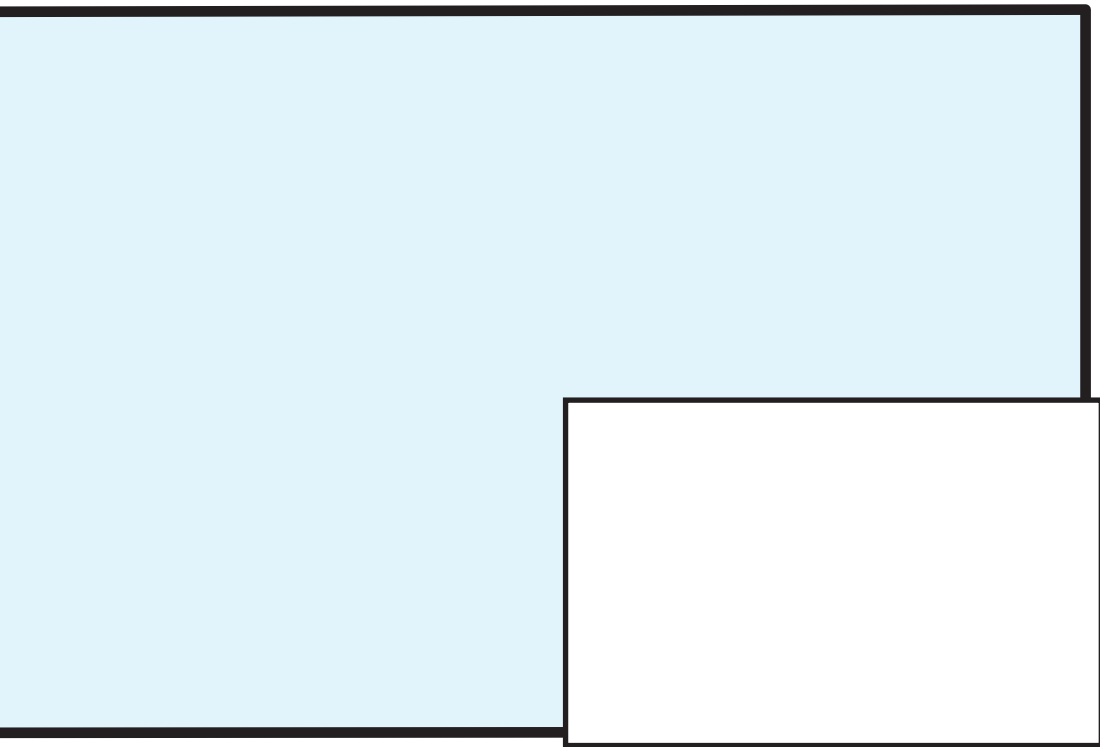
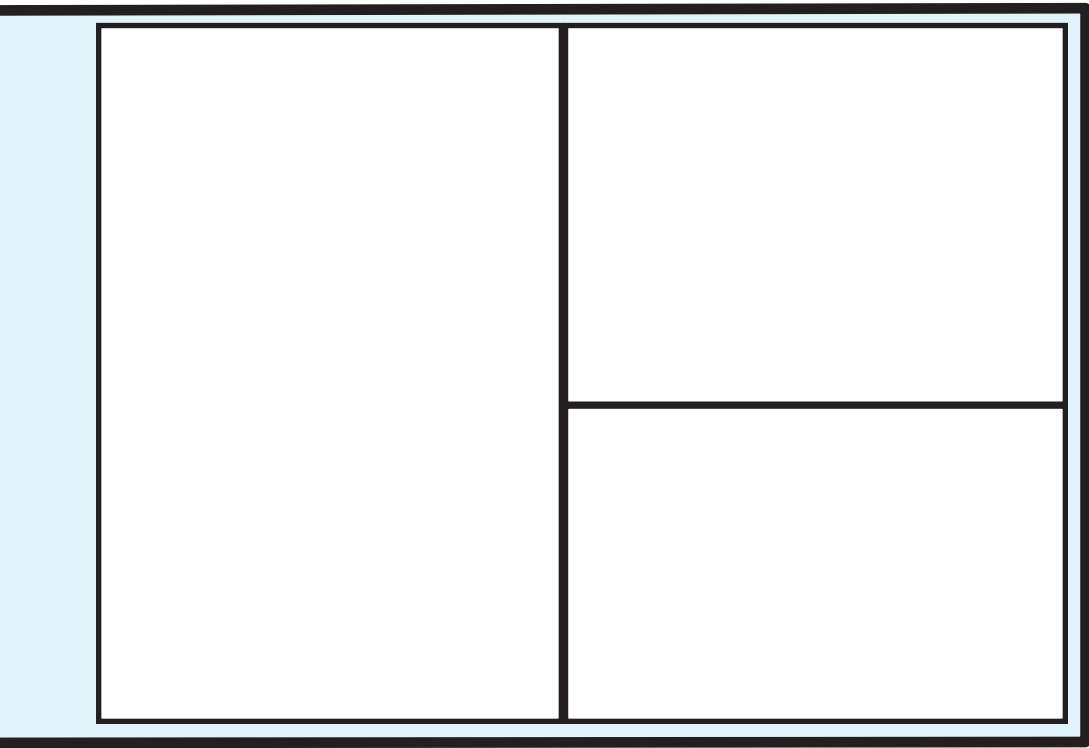
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A Note from the Author

Ever since I was a boy, I've loved comics because they're so simple. They don't require long paragraphs to tell a story. Instead, only a few words are needed for the characters to share their lives. I hope you've enjoyed using comic strips to tell stories from your life.

Now that you've finished, I'd like to learn about any ideas you have for creating comics. It's possible I will work on another book like this in the future, and your comic strip ideas might be a perfect fit. When you send ideas, include your name and address along with parent permission to use your suggestions. If I am able to use one of your ideas in a future book, you will get a free copy.

Send ideas for comic strips or other activities to:

Bill Zimmerman

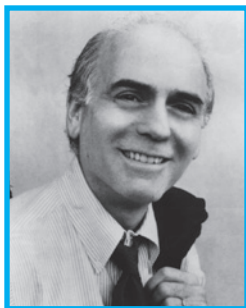
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P.S. If you liked *Your Life in Comics*, you might also enjoy reading my book *100 Things Guys Need to Know* (available at www.freespirit.com). It's full of comic strips and other cool things about being a guy.



This book is dedicated to my dad, who used to bring home the Sunday comics each week and who bought me my first comic book. With thanks to my editor, Douglas Fehlen, for all his encouragement and great help in finding the websites cited throughout this book. —B.Z.

About the Author



Bill Zimmerman has been a journalist, a prize-winning newspaper editor, and an author for many years. Much of his work has been directed toward empowering young people and helping families become closer. Bill's books include *Pocket Doodles for Artists*, *Pocket Doodles for Kids*, *Doodles & Daydreams*, *100 Things Guys Need to Know*, *My Paper Memory Quilt*, *Lunch Box Letters*, *How to Tape Instant Oral Biographies*, *A Book of Questions*, *Make Beliefs*, *Make Beliefs for Kids of All Ages*, *Lifelines*, *The Little Book of Joy*, *Dogmas*, *Cat-e-Chisms*, *A Book of Sunshine*, *My Life: An Open Book*, *Idea Catchers for Kids*, and *Butterfly Wishes*.

Bill is the creator of MakeBeliefsComix.com, where visitors can create their own comic strips online. The site is used by students and teachers in more than 180 countries to teach literacy, reading, writing, and storytelling and has received the Parents' Choice Foundation Recommended Award. Bill also teaches writing and reading to young people and immigrant students learning English. He is available for speaking engagements addressing positive youth development.

About the Illustrator



Tyler Page lives in Minneapolis with his wife, Cori Doerrfeld (who is also an artist), and their daughter. He has made comics and illustrations for local and international clients as well as published six of his own graphic novels. Tyler was nominated for an Eisner Award in 2003 and received a Xeric Foundation grant in 2007 to publish the first volume of his comic series "Nothing Better." When he's not drawing, Tyler serves

as the Director of Print Technology Services at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

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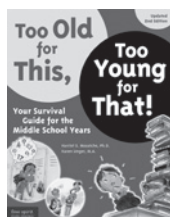
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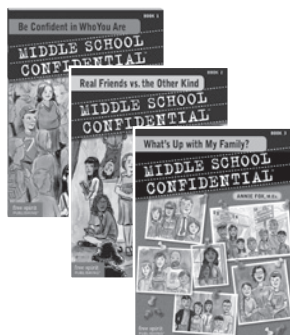
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